

U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
Sacramento, California

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
PALO ALTO / MT VIEW / MOFFETT AREA RECLAIMED WATER
PIPELINE PROJECT**

PALO ALTO AND MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA

Recommended:


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9-22-2006
Date

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9/26/06
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9/27/06
Date

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PALO ALTO / MT VIEW / MOFFETT AREA RECLAIMED WATER PIPELINE PROJECT

Palo Alto and Mountain View, California

Lead Agency:

Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

The Proposed Action will expand the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant's water reuse system by extending a pipeline to sites in Mountain View, California. The project will supply recycled water for use in irrigation of parks, golf courses, medians, and other green spaces. Public Law 102-575, Title XVI, Section 1604, provides general authority for the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to participate with a non-Federal sponsor in a feasibility study for water recycling projects. In order for Reclamation to participate further in the design and construction of this project, Congress must provide construction authorization and appropriation.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, and the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), the Mid-Pacific Regional Office of the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has found that the Proposed Action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Background

Palo Alto's Water Reuse Program began in the early 1980s, with the delivery of reclaimed water to Shoreline Golf Links. The system was substantially modified to include the Palo Alto golf course, Greer Park, and the Renzel Marsh. Palo Alto then completed a *Water Reclamation Master Plan for the Palo Alto RWQCP* in 1992 and the accompanying Final Program EIR in 1995. The Program EIR evaluated, at a program-level, development of a regional water reuse system that could ultimately provide service to the entire RWQCP service area. The Palo Alto RWQCP developed the Master Plan in conjunction with its member agencies to address two main goals:

- 1) Reduce demand on drinking water supplies by providing recycled water suitable for nonpotable uses and

- 2) Reduce metals discharge and improve overall water quality to the San Francisco Bay in part by reducing waste water discharge to the bay. The Master Plan includes a phased approach to the expansion of treatment, distribution, storage and use of recycled water.

The City prepared and circulated an Initial Study/Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in December 2003 that examined potential impacts associated with the construction of the City of Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant Recycled Water Pipeline Project, one of the projects identified in the Master Plan. With minor modifications, this project is the same as the Proposed Action.

Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, recycled water will be provided to users in Mountain View at parks, golf courses and medians. A new pipeline will be constructed, and the old pipeline will be abandoned in place. No modifications at the RWQCP, such as increased capacity or storage will be needed. The project will supply an estimated 1,600 acre feet per year of recycled water to users.

Findings

Reclamation prepared a draft Environment Assessment (EA) in September 2006, which analyzed the impacts of the project. Based upon the analysis in the EA, Reclamation found that there were no significant impacts. The reasons why the impacts of the Proposed Action, which are discussed in detail in the EA, are not significant are summarized as follows:

1. **Aesthetics** - The Project will not significantly affect aesthetics. All proposed pipeline segments will be installed underground or hung from existing bridges. There will be some temporary visual changes, but no permanent changes to the visual condition of the Project area in Palo Alto or Mountain View. Scenic resources such as trees, rock, or historic buildings will not be damaged by construction, and any damaged roads or landscaping as a result of construction will be repaired.
2. **Air Quality** - The Project will not significantly affect air quality. The proposed Project includes excavation activities that will generate fugitive dust and other criteria pollutants. Construction contract provisions will include a dust abatement program. Daily combustion emission impacts from construction vehicles will not be significant due to the relatively small scale of the Project. Criteria pollutant emissions from these emission sources will incrementally add to regional atmospheric loading of ozone precursors during the construction period.

With respect to project conformity with the federal Clean Air Act, the Project's potential emissions are below minimum thresholds and are well below 10 percent of the area's inventory specified for each criteria pollutant designated non-attainment or maintenance for the Bay Area. As such, further general conformity analysis is not required.

3. **Biological Resources** - The Project will not adversely affect biological resources. As discussed in the Project Description, the majority of the proposed pipeline will be constructed in paved streets or other disturbed areas that are not likely to support biological resources. The pipeline will hang from bridges crossing Matadero Creek, Permanente Creek, Adobe Creek and Stevens Creek, and therefore the project will not affect aquatic species or wetlands.
4. **Threatened and Endangered Species** - The Project will not affect threatened and endangered species. A list of federally-listed species to be considered was compiled from review of the FWS website, the California Natural Diversity Data Base, and literature review of relevant studies in the project area; the potential for effect on these species was evaluated. As discussed in the Project Description, the majority of the proposed pipeline will be constructed in paved streets or other disturbed areas that are not likely to support biological resources. The pipeline will hang from bridges crossing Matadero Creek, Permanente Creek, Adobe Creek and Stevens Creek and therefore the project will not affect aquatic species or wetlands. There will be no effect to federally-listed species and no adverse modification of critical habitat.
5. **Cultural Resources** - The Project will not affect cultural resources. A records search of all pertinent survey and site data was conducted at the Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State University. Previous surveys and studies and archaeological site records were accessed as they pertained to the Area of Potential Effects. A field reconnaissance of the proposed alignment was also conducted by an archaeologist. No cultural resource sites will be affected by project-related activities and the likelihood of encountering cultural resources within the project area is low. Although no cultural resources were observed during the project survey, sites and objects may yet exist in the project area, therefore mitigation measures have been identified to protect these resources if they are discovered during construction.

Prior to the obligation of Federal funds for the purpose of construction, consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Office must be completed pursuant to the 36 CFR Part 800 regulations outlining Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470w[7]).

6. **Indian Trust Assets** - The Project will not affect Indian Trust Assets (ITAs). ITAs are legal interests in property or rights held in trust by the United States for Indian Tribes or individual Indians. Indian reservations, Rancherias, and Public Domain Allotments are common ITAs in California. No ITAs have been identified at or near the location of the Project.
7. **Geology and Soils** - The Project will not significantly affect geology and soils. The proposed Project will involve excavation through a variety of geologic features. The Project will not expose people to substantial adverse risks because no habitable structures are being built. The site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo "Earthquake Fault Zone" for fault rupture hazard, potential for ground failure is low, and landslide potential is low. The Project is located in an area that is partly reclaimed tidal wetlands, and therefore classified as having a high liquefaction potential. Furthermore, the Project could undergo very strong to violent

ground shaking in the event of an earthquake. Soil disturbance as a result of the Project construction can be controlled by standard erosion-control techniques to prevent pollution of surface waters.

8. **Hazards and Hazardous Materials** - The Project will not significantly affect hazards and hazardous materials. Uncontrolled release of hazardous materials during the construction phase of the Project will be a potentially significant impact, which is mitigated by Measures HM-1 and HM-2. No hazardous materials will be used routinely during Project operation, and there are no known hazardous material contaminated sites in the immediate Project area.
9. **Hydrology and Water Quality** - The Project will not significantly affect hydrology of the area. Also Project implementation will not affect any Wild and Scenic River designated waterways. During construction, standard erosion control techniques should be implemented to reduce any impacts to less than significant (Measure WQ-1). Operation of the Project will be conducted in accordance with all applicable federal and state requirements. Use of tertiary recycled water that this Project hopes to accomplish will reduce demand placed upon the local aquifer, so potential impacts to groundwater are considered beneficial. Installation of the proposed pipeline will not substantially alter the drainage patterns in the Project vicinity because of the relatively small amount of impermeable surfaces that will be installed. No impacts on downstream flood conditions are anticipated.
10. **Land Use and Planning** - The Project will not conflict with land use plans. Since the Project is in part to replace a deteriorated unusable section of pipeline, the Project is classified as a utility upgrade. No conflicts with land use plans will be associated with Project implementation.
11. **Noise** - The Project will not significantly affect noise levels. Project construction will result in intermittent, elevated noise levels within the nearby commercial and residential areas, and will increase ambient noise levels, which is mitigated by Measure N-1.
12. **Population** - The Project will not induce growth. The new recycled water supply will be used only to better manage peak season demands during summer periods and to maintain irrigation to landscaping during drought.
13. **Environmental Justice** - Implementing the Project will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities.
14. **Transportation/Traffic** - The Project will not significantly affect transportation /traffic flows. Pipeline installation activities will temporarily disrupt transportation and circulation patterns in the vicinity of the Project. There will be potential temporary construction impacts including disruption of traffic flows and street operations, reduction in travel lanes and on-street parking, and potential conflicts between construction traffic and bicyclists and pedestrians. Temporary effects on the potential for accidents, emergency access, displacement of on-street parking, and disruptions to transit service could also occur. All traffic impacts will be mitigated to less-than-significant by Measure T-1.

15. Utilities and Service Systems - The Project will not affect utilities and service systems. Project operation will not result in any exceedance of wastewater treatment requirements, since the use of recycled water will be in accordance with Title 22 and the RWQCB-issued NPDES permit. The Project will not require additional facilities other than those proposed, and will not increase the need for additional off-site storm water drainage facilities. No wastewater will be generated, so no impacts will occur concerning the regional waste water treatment facilities. No long-term solid waste generation will be associated with the Project, and the construction contractor will be required to comply with all pertinent regulations regarding the disposal of solid waste.